



# **2021 DYA Seniors Softball Rules (Participating in NCS League)**

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## Introduction

The DYA Seniors League, for the second year, is participating with the North Columbus Sports (NCS) High School Softball League, which has some different rules compared to those historically used for DYA Seniors Softball. This update to the rule book attempts to align the NCS rules within the DYA rules. For reference, the NCS rules are provided in Attachment A.

DYA Coaches and Umpires are expected to work with the NCS Coaches on rules interpretations as in our attempt to align the NCS rules within the DYA rules, we recognize that there may be some instances where we did not get them completely aligned (inadvertently or purposefully). There are two known rules that will only be applicable to DYA teams and not to the NCS teams: 1) DYA playing time requirements will only be applicable to DYA teams and NCS will have to adhere to their playing time rules; and 2) DYA teams are not allowed to wear metal cleats, whereas NCS teams can wear metal cleats/spikes.

## 1 Program

### 1.1 Senior League Definition

- 1.1.1 This league is designed for girls interested in playing recreational softball for girls in the 7<sup>th</sup> thru 12<sup>th</sup> grades.
- 1.1.2 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders may play in the Majors League at the discretion of the Softball Director and League Commissioner(s).
- 1.1.3 Except in a call up situation (see Rule 3.4), players will only be allowed to “play-up” if a parent is either the Head Coach or the named Assistant Coach. Exceptions to grades must be approved by the Softball Director and League Commissioner.

### 1.2 Uniforms

- 1.2.1 Visors and socks are included in the fee paid to DYA. A grey and green jersey set is required for participation in games. For home games, players wear the green jersey and for away games, players wear the gray jersey. Players will provide white, black, or gray softball pants (color to be determined by the team). Players are to wear their uniforms when playing in any game. Shoes with metal cleats are NOT allowed (NCS Rules allow metal spikes).

### 1.3 League Play

- 1.3.1 This is a competitive league. Coaches are not permitted in the field of play during an inning.
- 1.3.2 League play will conclude with a post-season tournament. Tournament winners (1st & 2nd place) may be awarded trophies (depends on NCS).
- 1.3.3 Games will typically be scheduled Monday through Saturday.
- 1.3.4 Tournament games and rainout games may be scheduled on Sundays, if necessary.
- 1.3.5 Paid umpires are provided and are paid by the Home Team during the regular season.

### 1.4 Player Team Assignments / League Drafts

- 1.4.1 All players are assigned by draft each season.

### 1.5 Rules Basis

- 1.5.1 The Ohio High School Athletic Association (OHSAA) Softball Rules, which are based on the National Federation of High School Rules (NFHS), are the basis for the DYA Softball rules.
- 1.5.2 NCS rules are based on the American Softball Association (ASA) Rules.

- 1.5.3 DYA and NCS rules differences, if they come up and cause confusion/disagreement between the teams and/or umpires, should be discussed and agreed upon between both head coaches and umpires. If the head coaches and umpires cannot mutually agree on a specific rule difference and its application, then the ASA rule will prevail.
- 1.5.4 Rules within this rule book supersede the OHSAA/NFHS or ASA rules.

## 2 Game Procedures

### 2.1 Game Schedule

- 2.1.1 Games must be played at the scheduled dates and times, unless approved by the League Commissioner.

### 2.2 Game Start - Minimum Number of Players

*NOTE – Forfeit does NOT mean a game is not played; rather, it only refers to the outcome (win or loss) of the game.*

- 2.2.1 ALL teams must field **seven (7)** defensive players to start a game. Games may be delayed up to 15 minutes, but the end time remains the same, **2 hours (See NCS Rules in Attachment A regarding time limit)**, from the scheduled start time. If delayed, the game will begin the instant the eighth player arrives.
- 2.2.2 Teams with fewer than **7** players after a 15-minute delay must forfeit the outcome of the game; however, a game will be played as described below. There will be no forfeits resulting in a game not being played.
- a. Teams may play with 6 players and borrow up to 3 defensive players from the opposing team (may be different players each defensive inning to minimize interrupting the batting order of the team lending players). If a team has 5 or fewer players, a game is still played with the coaches evenly distributing talent - the shorthanded team records a loss for the game. If both teams are lacking players, coaches may divide up the available players fairly to field two teams.
- 2.2.3 **If a team loses a player or players during a game due to injury or other reasons, reducing their roster to less than 7 players, they may borrow players from the opposing team for defense. The outcome of the game will count in the standings and in tournament play.**

### 2.3 Game Duration

- 2.3.1 A game will consist of seven (7) innings or **2 hours (See “Last Inning” below and NCS Rules in Attachment A regarding time limit)** from the scheduled starting time (regardless of when the game actually started), whichever comes first.

#### **Last Inning:**

- a. Both coaches and the umpire(s) shall agree and announce that the upcoming inning will be the last inning and the number of runs allowed will be unlimited. It is recommended that the Last Inning is announced after a full inning has been completed and at least 1:40 minutes after the game start time.
- b. When the Last Inning has been Announced:
- i. The 5 runs per half-inning limit rule (see 5.6.2) does not apply.
- ii. If the visiting team is 10 or more runs ahead going into the Announced Last Inning, the home team bats first. If the home team does not score 10 or more runs in it's at bat, the game is over.
- c. In the event an inning that was NOT announced as the last inning goes past the 2-hour limit, the game will be completed without the unlimited runs per inning being allowed (i.e., 5 run limit).

- 2.3.2 The Umpire is the official timekeeper, unless the umpire does not have a time keeping device. If this occurs, the Home Team's head coach will be the timekeeper.
- 2.3.3 The start of an inning is the time when the last out was recorded in the bottom of the previous inning. For example, if the last out of an inning is made at 1 hour, 59 minutes, 59 seconds after the scheduled start time, the next inning is to be played even though the batter will not come to the plate until after the 2-hour time limit.
- 2.3.4 **Tournament Time Limit:** the DYA and NCS Softball Directors will determine if a modified time limit will be used during the tournament, such as a drop-dead time (game ends, regardless of the situation) after 2:30, with the score based on the last fully completed inning.

## 2.4 Complete Games

- 2.4.1 Games will be considered complete when the time limit has been reached as described in Rule 2.3 or seven (7) complete innings have been played (6½ innings if the home team is winning).
- 2.4.2 If the time limit has not been reached, a full 7 innings has not been played due the home team winning after 6½ innings, AND both head coaches agree, the bottom half of the 7<sup>th</sup> inning may be played up until the 2-hour time limit is reached, which is considered a drop-dead time in this situation. Umpires are to continue working the game in this situation unless they have another scheduled game immediately afterwards (umpiring or playing).
- 2.4.3 **No Mercy Rule:** There is no mercy rule (i.e., run rule). Games will be seven (7) innings, unless limited by time (also refer to Rule 2.3.1).

## 2.5 Rainouts and Makeups

- 2.5.1 Games suspended by weather are considered complete if 4 innings have been played (3½ if the home team is winning). If fewer than that has been played, during the regular season the game will be considered "rained out."
- 2.5.2 During the tournament, the game will be rescheduled and will start where the rained-out game was suspended.
- 2.5.3 Makeups, if any, of rained out games will be rescheduled as soon as possible at the direction of the League Commissioner. For games at DYA fields, the League Commissioners shall coordinate makeups with the DYA Athletic Director and Umpire Commissioner. The League Commissioner's decision is final as to game date, time, and location.

## 2.6 Ties

- 2.6.1 During the regular season if the game is tied after 7 innings, it shall be scored a tie, even if the time limit has not been reached, unless NCS plays extra innings during the regular season.
- 2.6.2 Extra innings will be used to break ties during tournament play.
- 2.6.3 **Extra Inning Format**
- Beginning in the 8<sup>th</sup> inning, and each half inning thereafter, the offensive team shall begin its turn at bat with the player scheduled to bat last, placed on second base.
  - During the regular season, if extra innings are played, the time-limit is still in effect and the game can end in a tie.
  - During the Tournament, games are played until a winner is determined.

## 2.7 Pre-Game Warmups

- 2.7.1 There will be NO batting practice on the field of play fifteen (15) minutes prior to the game's scheduled starting time. Furthermore, there will be NO soft-toss or pepper permitted at any time. Soft toss is hitting the ball into any fence or net as a batting practice alternative. Pepper is hitting/bunting a soft pitched ball back to the pitcher, usually outside the field of play. Both are dangerous to players and fans and soft toss is destructive to the facilities.
- 2.7.2 Violations of the no-soft-toss or pepper rule can subject the coach to disciplinary action by the Program Director.
- 2.7.3 Each team shall have 7 minutes of infield warm-ups prior to the start of each game. Home team shall have infield warm-ups first. All infield warm-ups will be completed by one (1) minute before scheduled starting time.
- 2.7.4 Infield warm-ups will be shortened or eliminated in order to keep game start times on schedule. This is particularly important on Saturdays and evenings when more than one game is scheduled on the field. Game start times are to be kept on time.

## 2.8 In-Game Warmups (between inning halves)

- 2.8.1 Games are to be kept moving along. One (1) minute between inning halves is an acceptable limit.
- 2.8.2 Coaches should have players ready to take to the field, etc. immediately after the half inning ends. Batters should be ready to take their at bat as soon as the pitcher finishes their warmup.
- 2.8.3 Infield/outfield warmups are permitted between innings as long as it does not delay the game AND must only be used while the pitcher is taking their warmup pitches. Umpires can take away this privilege if it is abused and causes delays.
- 2.8.4 Pitching Warmups:
- Pitchers will be allowed 5 warmup pitches on the field.
  - If the catcher is not ready to warm up the pitcher at the start of an inning, an adult should take the place of the catcher.
  - All youth catchers who warm up a pitcher MUST wear a mask.

## 2.9 Coaches, Players and Fan Expectations

- 2.9.1 Players are to remain on the bench unless involved in play. In play includes warming up, on deck, or other legitimate direction from the coaches.
- 2.9.2 Players, coaches, and scorekeepers are the only persons allowed to be on the team bench after the umpire starts the game.
- 2.9.3 Coaches, other than base coaches and scorekeepers on the team bench are required to remain in the dugouts behind the fenced areas. Coaches are not to position themselves in the field of play in front of the dugout fence.
- 2.9.4 Fans are required to remain well back of the playing field.
- 2.9.5 Players, coaches, and fans are not permitted behind the backstop and must move if requested to do so by a coach or umpire.
- 2.9.6 Head Coaches and Assistant Coaches are expected to exercise influence over the fans. Games can be terminated for fan unruliness; but this is an extreme measure and is to be avoided except under the most extreme circumstances.
- 2.9.7 Players, coaches, or spectators may NOT harass the batter, base runners, pitcher, or fielders.

2.9.8 Players, coaches, and fans may encourage pitchers or batters, but not to the point of influencing calls made by the umpire or swings taken by the batter (e.g., shouting “good pitch” before the ball has crossed home plate and the call has been made by the umpire is not permitted).

2.9.9 Game termination is at the sole discretion of the umpire(s).

## 2.10 Injuries

2.10.1 The player’s health comes first.

2.10.2 If a player is hurt, the game will be stopped at the appropriate time (typically when the play is over).

2.10.3 Concern for the player is the responsibility of all coaches.

2.10.4 The injured player will sit out that half of the inning in which the player was injured.

## 2.11 Field Setup and Cleanup

2.11.1 If necessary, HOME TEAM WILL SET UP THE FIELD, such as laying out the bases and ensuring the pitcher’s plate (rubber) is at the proper distance from home plate.

League	Pitching Distance from Home Plate	Base Length	Pitcher’s Circle	Softball Size
Seniors	43 feet	60 feet	16 feet diameter	12” ball

2.11.2 Both teams are required to clean up their respective areas, picking up paper and disposing in trash barrels.

2.11.3 After the last game of the day, the VISITING TEAM WILL TAKE UP THE BASES and put them in the dugout or on the bench. **If playing an NCS team at a DYA field, the home team (DYA) will be responsible for picking up the bases.**

## 2.12 Umpire Calls and Conferences

2.12.1 NO HEAD COACH OR ASSISTANT COACH CAN QUESTION AN UMPIRE’S JUDGMENT CALL.

- Only Head Coaches may question the umpires and only regarding the RULES.
- Coaches are to approach the umpire, not yell from the benches.

2.12.2 A Head Coach may request for a conference with the umpire(s):

- The request can be ONLY to discuss a RULE.
- Both teams’ head coaches and the umpire(s) must be involved in the conference (Assistant Coaches, Base Coaches, Players or Fans are NOT ALLOWED to participate in the conference).
- Time limit for such a conference is three (3) minutes.
- The umpire(s) decision is final.

2.12.3 No player or fan is allowed to question or argue with an umpire’s call, regardless if it is a judgment call or an interpretation of the rules.

## 2.13 Umpire Buddies

2.13.1 An umpire buddy is a volunteer parent or parents from each team who will help the coach control unruly fans. They are to remind the fans who the league is for. Umpire calls will be final whether the coaches agree or not. The “Buddy” is to be available to eliminate unnecessary arguing.

## 2.14 Official Scorer

2.14.1 The home team will provide the official scorer for each game and each team’s scorekeeper should verify the score between innings. Both head coaches must agree on the final score before leaving the field.

## 2.15 Reporting Scores

- 2.15.1 After each game, both coaches are responsible for reporting the final score to the **NCS and DYA** League Commissioners.

## 3 Participation Rules

The following Player Participation Rules apply to the DYA Teams. NCS Player Participation Rules are provided in Attachment A. Note that the head coaches, not the umpires, are responsible for following their respective participation rules.

### 3.1 General

- 3.1.1 All players are to be treated fairly with respect to other players.
- 3.1.2 Coaches' failure to comply with the Participation Rules will place the coach's action up for review by the Program Director and may subject the team to forfeiture of a win or subject the coach to disciplinary action.
- 3.1.3 Players arriving after the 13<sup>th</sup> out (1<sup>st</sup> out of the 3<sup>rd</sup> inning) of the game need not be played, but may be at the discretion of the head coach. Said late player is added to the bottom of the batting order, if played.
- 3.1.4 If a player is a discipline problem, the amount of playing time on defense will be at the coach's discretion. The coach is to inform the player and player's parent(s) why the player will not play the number of innings described below. ***Before the game, the coach is also to inform the opposing coach of any player who will not be playing the number of innings described above.***

### 3.2 Batting Order

- 3.2.1 All players listed on the roster shall be included in the batting order (if at the game).
- 3.2.2 Every team member will be in the batting order even if that team member was not in the field the prior ½ inning.
- 3.2.3 There will be no designated hitter.
- 3.2.4 Players arriving after the start of the game will be added to the end of the batting order.

### 3.3 Defensive Innings Played

- 3.3.1 No player will sit the bench in consecutive innings, including extra innings.
- 3.3.2 Free substitution of defensive players is allowed.
- 3.3.3 After 4 defensive innings have been played, no player will have sat the bench one inning more than any other player. Furthermore, for the remainder of the game, no player will sit the bench one inning more than any other player.
- 3.3.4 Each team shall rotate all players through infield and outfield positions throughout the season. All positions in the outfield are considered one position. No player is to play only outfield in a game if this is not what the player wants to do.
- 3.3.5 Each player must be allowed to play the requisite number of defense innings, provided the player:
- Is present at the start of the game.
  - Has not been a discipline problem.
  - Does not leave prior to the end of the game.
  - Is not injured during the game.

### 3.4 Call Ups - Not Enough Players:

- 3.4.1 If a team will have 9 or fewer players, they may call up a player from the Majors.
- 3.4.2 The player called up to play may not miss their own game to play up.
- 3.4.3 All the players on the team's roster will play at least the same number of innings as the player called up - provided the team's regular player(s) are present at the start of the game.
- 3.4.4 No called up players may pitch.
- 3.4.5 The called-up player must be reported to the opposing team as such and must wear her own jersey.
- 3.4.6 Only currently registered DYA Softball players can participate in a DYA game **for a DYA team (unless players are borrowed from an NCS team when the DYA team is short players)**.
- 3.4.7 Violation of the rule is subject to game forfeiture (the game is still played, but is considered a loss in the standings and tournament seeding).

## 4 Ground Rules

### 4.1 Playing Conditions

- 4.1.1 Ground rules (playing conditions such as a muddy spot in the infield, or field anomalies such as a hole in the fence) will be discussed before each game.
- 4.1.2 Coaches and umpires have the responsibility for making any changes to the ground rules to protect the fielders or batters in the game.

**NOTE** - Coaches are NOT to change rules (i.e., do not make agreements that alter league rules such as on overthrows).

### 4.2 Dugout Assignments

- 4.2.1 Home team will sit on the first base side.
- 4.2.2 Visiting team will site on the third base side.

### 4.3 Base Coaches

**NOTE** - Base Coach Boxes are not drawn on the diamond; however, the area near 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> base, approximately 3-4 feet in foul territory extending approximately 15-20 feet towards home plate from the base, should be considered the Coach's Boxes.

- 4.3.1 Base coach boxes are in play.
- 4.3.2 Base coaches must stay in the vicinity of the base they are coaching.
- 4.3.3 Base coaches are not permitted to influence play by touching a runner (i.e., pushing a runner off the base, grabbing a runner to prevent overrunning the base, etc.).
- 4.3.4 Base coaches must be adults only. Players may not coach bases.

### 4.4 Balls Out of Play

- 4.4.1 Out of play shall be that area beyond a line (real or imaginary) extending indefinitely from the outside poles of the backstop fences, parallel with the foul lines. The umpire shall rule whether the ball has gone out-of-play and will make the appropriate rulings.
- 4.4.2 A ball that lands in fair territory beyond first (1<sup>st</sup>) or third (3<sup>rd</sup>) base and subsequently bounds out of play shall be a ground rule double.
- 4.4.3 Any ball dropping in fair territory in front of an outfielder and bounding out of play (including fair balls that roll under or bounce over the outfield fence) shall be ruled a ground rule double.

## 4.5 Time Outs

- 4.5.1 Time is out only when called by the umpire. Any player or coach may ask for time, but time is out only when called by the umpire.
- 4.5.2 On a batted ball, time may be called under the following conditions: Any infielder, including the pitcher and catcher, must have possession of the ball and be within the general vicinity of the base path and any runner or runners have stopped at their base(s). If a runner has made a turn at any base, the player may continue to run, even if the infielder has possession of the ball. Time cannot be called to stop a runner from advancing. If a runner has stopped on a base after a hit ball and a play is made on another runner going to another base, the stopped runner may advance at his/her own risk. For example, if the runner going from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 3<sup>rd</sup> stops on 3<sup>rd</sup> and a play is made on a runner going to 2<sup>nd</sup> base, the runner on 3<sup>rd</sup> may advance at their own risk toward home.

## 5 Local Rules

### 5.1 Batting

- 5.1.1 Bunting is allowed. An unsuccessful bunt (missed or foul) with two strikes is a strike out.
- 5.1.2 Strike Outs
- A Strike Out is when a batter has accrued 3 strikes by swinging or called by the umpire.
  - A foul ball is counted as a strike, but the third strike cannot be determined by a foul ball. There is no limit on the number of 2 strike foul balls a batter may hit.
  - A third strike can occur on a foul tip. A foul tip is a batted ball that goes directly from the bat to the catcher's mitt or hand and is legally caught. It is a strike, and the ball is live (it is to be treated as a swing and a miss). A batted ball that is tipped and not caught is a foul ball.
- 5.1.3 Uncaught (Dropped) Third Strike
- The Uncaught (Dropped) Third Strike rule will be observed, i.e., when the catcher fails to catch the third strike before the ball touches the ground, the batter can become a runner on an uncaught (dropped) third strike except when first base is occupied with fewer than two outs. See Rule 5.2.6.c for special situation regarding the use of safety bases.
- 5.1.4 Thrown Bats/Objects
- If a player throws the bat (or other objects) intentionally in anger, the player should be ejected from the game. There will be no warnings for objects thrown in anger.
  - If the bat slips from the batter's hands, there is no penalty unless the discarded bat prevents the defense from making a play on the ball, and interference should be called.
- 5.1.5 Batting Order
- If a player leaves the game for any reason, the first occurrence of the player missing an at bat will count as an out; subsequent occurrences will NOT count as an out.
  - If only 7 or 8 players start the game, the unoccupied batter spots will be automatic outs for the first occurrence only.

### 5.2 Base Running

- 5.2.1 **Sliding** - It is DYA's objective to teach and encourage proper sliding. Whether or not to slide is at the discretion of the player; however, a base runner not sliding **must** avoid collision with the fielder or be called out.

Players are to avoid flagrant contact. Flagrant contact will not be tolerated and may result in disqualification.

- Base runners are generally permitted the free privilege to run from base to base without being

physically blocked or hindered (called defensive obstruction) by a fielder, including the catcher. The only time a fielder does not have to "get out of the way" of a base runner is:

- i. The fielder is in the act of fielding a batted ball,
  - ii. The fielder is receiving a thrown ball (defined as the ball is in flight over the infield towards that fielder), or
  - iii. The fielder is in possession of the ball.
- b. If a fielder is obstructing (as defined above) the path of the base runner, the runner may run outside the baseline to avoid a collision with the fielder and will not be subject to being called out.
- c. If a fielder is legally in the path of the base runner, the runner, if not sliding, may avoid a collision with the fielder by running around the fielder, but may be subject to being called out if running outside of the baseline as determined by the umpire.

5.2.2 Lead Offs are not permitted.

- a. Base runners shall not be off the base prior to the pitched ball being released from the pitcher's hand. **PENALTY:** Base runner is OUT.

5.2.3 **Base Stealing** – For purposes of DYA, the definition of stealing shall include advancing a base by stealing, advancing a base on a wild pitch, and advancing a base on a passed ball.

Base runners may steal any base, anytime, including home.

#### 5.2.4 **Look Back Rule**

The "Look Back" rule shall be in effect for all runners when the ball is live, the batter-runner has reached first base or has been declared out, and the pitcher has possession and control of the ball within the pitcher's circle. When a runner is legitimately off a base the runner may stop once, but then immediately return to the base or attempt to advance to the next base. Once the runner stops at a base for any reason, the runner will be declared out if leaving the base.

Responsibilities of batter-runner after completing a turn at bat, and while the pitcher has the ball within the pitching circle, including a base on balls or a dropped third strike are as follows:

- a. A batter-runner who rounds first base toward second base may stop, but then must immediately, without stopping, return to first or attempt to advance to second base.
- b. A batter-runner who overruns first base toward right field, turns left and immediately stops, must then return non-stop to first or attempt to advance to second base.
- c. A batter-runner who overruns first base toward right field, turns left and moves directly toward second base and stops is committed to second and must attempt to advance non-stop to second base.
- d. A batter-runner who overruns first base toward right field, turns left and moves back toward the infield in any direction except directly toward second base is committed to first and must return to first base.
- e. A batter-runner who overruns first base toward right field, and turns right, is committed to first base, and must return to first base.

**PENALTY:** The ball is dead, and the runner is out (only one runner may be called out.). Other runners are returned to the last base touched. **EXCEPTION:** The batter-runner will not be declared out if a play is made on another runner (a fake throw is considered a play), the pitcher no longer has possession of the ball, or moves outside of the circle.

5.2.5 The offensive team should use a "courtesy runner" for the catcher when there are two outs. This is a "speed up" rule intended to keep the games moving along. Note: use the player who made the last batted out.

### 5.2.6 Double Bases (Safety Bases)

- a. The batter-runner is to use the outside base (the one in foul territory) after hitting the ball in play and the fielder (typically the first baseman) is use the inside base (the base in fair territory), with the noted exceptions below.
- b. If the first baseman is not occupying the inside base, the batter-runner may use either base.
- c. On an uncaught (dropped) third strike that bounds in foul territory on the first base side, if the catcher throws to the first baseman from foul territory, the first baseman shall occupy the base in foul territory and the runner has the right to the base in fair territory. Note that the batter-runner may not know where the ball is being thrown from; thus, the path must be decided by the position of the first baseman.

## 5.3 Pitching

Note, ASA Pitching Rules will prevail. For reference, the major differences between ASA and NFHS pitching rules are indicated in italics.

### 5.3.1 Preliminaries

- a. Both feet must be in contact with the pitching plate with hands separated while taking the signal (*NFHS allows the non-pivot foot to be in contact with or behind the pitcher's plate*).
- b. The pitcher shall bring the hands together in front of the body for not less than one second and not more than 10 seconds.
- c. The pitch must be delivered in not more than 20 seconds after the previous pitch, or the umpire signals "Play".

### 5.3.2 About the Pitch:

- a. The pitch starts when the hands are separated once they have been placed together (*NFHS: The pitch starts when one hand is taken off the ball or the pitcher makes any motion that is part of the wind up after the hands have been brought together*).
- b. A step must be taken, and it can only be forward (*NFHS allows a step backward is allowed with the non-pivot foot, but must start before the hands come together. The step backward may end before or after the hands come together.*).
- c. The pitcher must not make more than two revolutions of the arm on the windmill pitch. A pitcher may drop the arm to the side and to the rear before starting the windmill motion (*NFHS Not more than one and a half clockwise revolutions of the arm in the windmill pitch.*).
- d. The pivot foot may remain in contact with or may push off and drag away from the pitching plate prior to the front foot touching the ground, as long as the pivot foot remains in contact with the ground and within the 24-inch length. Pushing off with the pivot foot from a place other than the pitcher's plate is illegal.

### 5.3.3 Illegal Pitches

- a. The ball is dead at the end of playing action if the ball is pitched. A ball is called on the batter, and base runners are awarded one base without liability to be put out.

### 5.3.4 Pitching Inning Limits

- a. None
- b. Pitcher may be substituted in the middle of an at bat, even for their first batter faced (*NFHS: Pitcher must pitch to at least one batter until the batter is out or on base before being removed as the pitcher, unless injured*).
- c. No limit to the number of times a pitcher may be removed and re-enter to pitch (*NFHS: re-entry limited to once per inning*). Upon re-entry during an inning, the pitcher does not get any warmup pitches.

- d. Even though there is no longer a limit to pitcher's innings, DYA coaches are strongly encouraged to develop pitchers during the regular season for the good of their players, team, and future of the league.

5.3.5 **Hit By Pitch (HBP)** - A batter is awarded first base if a pitched ball touches any part of the batter or their clothing, providing that a., b., and c. are true:

- a. The pitch is outside of the strike zone,
- b. The batter did not swing at the pitch, and
- c. The batter attempts to avoid the pitch.

Regarding condition c, the following applies:

- i. A batter that had no opportunity to avoid the pitch or “freezes” (i.e., pitcher throws so hard, or batter is so scared they have no time to react to avoid pitch) is considered HBP,
- ii. A batter that “leans” into the pitch to purposefully get hit is not an HBP, and the umpire is to call a ball or strike as if the batter had not been in the way of the ball,
- iii. Turning one’s body is considered an attempt to avoid being hit.

A pitch that first touches the ground and then hits the batter is considered a HBP provided b. & c. are true.

Any time the batter is touched by a pitched ball, the umpire shall declare the play DEAD (regardless of a. - c. above) and runners cannot advance unless forced by the batter being awarded first base.

5.3.6 Walks (**Intentional Base on Balls**)

- a. Walks are four balls called by the umpire.
- b. There is no “WALK LIMIT” per inning.
- c. Coaches are encouraged to change pitchers who are struggling to throw strikes.
- d. Intentional Base on Balls are allowed, but all pitches must be legally delivered (*NFHS allows notifying the umpire to issue an Intentional Base on Balls without throwing a pitch*).

5.3.7 Trips/Conferences to the Mound (Circle):

- a. Each team will be permitted three (3) free trips to the circle per game to consult with the team’s pitcher. On the fourth trip, as well as each subsequent trip to the mound, the pitcher must be removed. The removed pitcher may continue to stay in the field and play another position.
- b. Changing pitchers in the middle of an inning does not count as a trip (conference).

## 5.4 Defense

5.4.1 Number of Defensive Players

- a. Teams may field 9 players on defense (3 outfielders).
- b. Teams are permitted to play with fewer than required number of players, but must have at least seven (7) players on the field.

5.4.2 The **Infield Fly** Rule applies.

- a. An Infield Fly (IFF) is a fair fly ball (not a line drive or bunt) that, in the judgment of the umpire, can be caught by an infielder, pitcher, or catcher with ordinary effort and when there are runners on first and second or first, second, and third and less than two outs. When the umpire calls “infield fly” the batter is out, regardless of whether the ball is subsequently caught or dropped. The ball is live, the batter is out, which removes the force, and runners already on base may advance at their own risk if the ball is not caught or tag up and advance if it is caught.
- b. If a declared IFF becomes foul, it is treated as a foul ball, not an IFF.
- c. If an IFF situation occurs and an umpire does not declare an IFF; after the play, the defensive head coach may request a conference with the umpires (and other head coach) to question

misapplication of the IFF rule. If the umpire(s) agree that an IFF should have been called, they may retroactively call an IFF as not calling Infield Fly put both the offense and defense in jeopardy. The batter shall be declared out and the base runners returned to their bases at the time of the pitch.

## **5.5 Overthrows**

5.5.1 Play on overthrows shall be:

- a. If the ball goes out-of-play, the runners are awarded the base they are going to at the time the ball is thrown, plus one additional base.
- b. If the ball remains in play, the runners may advance at their own risk.

## **5.6 End of an Inning**

5.6.1 Three outs end a half-inning.

5.6.2 A team's at bat is completed when five (5) runs have been scored in the half-inning, regardless of the number of outs, unless the inning is announced as the Last Inning as described in Rule 2.3.1.

## Attachment A - North Columbus Sports (NCS) High School Girls Softball

Item	NCS Standard League Rules
Age	13-18, younger players permitted at coaches/leagues' discretion
Gender	Girls
Innings	7, 4 for official game (3.5 if home team is ahead)
Time Limit	No new inning after 2 hrs. Time is measured when the last out/run was made.
Base Distance	60 feet
Pitch Distance	43 feet, 16-foot circle
Pitcher Limits	None
Players	9 in field, 7 minimum to start, and no minimum to finish, see #4 below for details
Playing Time	Must play 2 of first 4 innings in the field
Roster Batting	YES, unlimited defensive substitutions.
Runs per Inning	Limit of 5 runs per inning, no limit in the last. Last inning must be announced and must start prior to the 2-hour time limit.
Run Rule	NO, but if visiting team is 10 or more runs ahead going into the announced last inning, home team bats first.
Walk/Hit by Pitch	YES
Bunting	YES
Stealing	YES
Lead Offs	YES, runners may leave when ball leaves pitchers hand
Illegal Pitch	YES, result is a ball and runners advance one base
Overthrow Rule	Ground rule dead balls only
Metal Spikes	YES
Legal Bat Size	Official softball bat
Infield Fly	YES
Dropped 3 <sup>rd</sup> Strike	YES

No.	NCS League Specific Rules
1	Before delivery to home, pitcher must start with both feet in contact with pitching rubber.
2	Facemasks are optional for all positions.
3	SUBS: A team may only pick up a player who is registered in the current division or in a lower division.
4	Once batting order has been established, an automatic out is given to any player unable to bat for the first occurrence only. After that, the player is skipped without penalty. If only 7 or 8 players start, the unoccupied batter spots will be automatic outs for the first occurrence only.
5	Late players are added to the bottom of the lineup.
6	Both coaches and the umpire(s) need to agree and announce that the upcoming inning will be the last inning and it will be unlimited. In the event an inning that was not announced as the last inning goes past the 2-hour mark, the game will end without the unlimited inning.

**UMPIRE CREDO**

- ✓ Umpires, while on the field, should not indulge in conversation with players. Keep out of the coaching box and do not talk to the coach on duty.
- ✓ Always be courteous to coaches, players, and fans; avoid visiting in either team’s dugout.
- ✓ Dress appropriately and look professional. Be active and alert on the field.
- ✓ When you enter a ballpark, your sole duty is to umpire a ball game as the representative of baseball.
- ✓ Keep the game moving. A ball game is often helped by energetic and earnest work of the umpires.
- ✓ You are the only official representative of baseball on the ball field. It is often a trying position which requires the exercise of much patience and good judgment, but do not forget that the first essential in working out of a bad situation is to keep your own temper and self-control.
- ✓ You no doubt are going to make mistakes, but never attempt to “even up” after having made one. Make all decisions as you see them. Forget which is the home or visiting team.
- ✓ Keep your eye everlastingly on the ball while it is in play. It is more vital to know just where a fly ball fell, or a thrown ball finished up, than whether or not a runner missed a base. Do not call the plays too quickly, or turn away too fast when a fielder is throwing to complete a play. Watch out for dropped balls after you have called a runner out.
- ✓ Do not come running with your arm up or down, denoting “out” or “safe.” Wait until the play is completed before making any arm motion.
- ✓ Have a conference with your partner so you can right a wrong call when you are convinced that you or your partner has made a glaring error. Do not carry conferences to extremes, but remember, the first requirement is to try to get the right call made. So, if in doubt, don’t hesitate to call a conference. Umpire dignity is important but never as important as “making the right call.”
- ✓ Most important rule for umpires is always “BE IN POSITION TO SEE EVERY PLAY.” Even when your decision is 100% correct, others will still question it if they feel you were not in a spot to see the play clearly and definitely.
- ✓ Finally, be courteous, impartial, and firm, and so compel respect from all.

**The 10 Commandments of Umpiring, by Ford C. Frick (1949)**

#	Commandment
1	Keep your eye on the ball.
2	Keep all your personalities out of your work. Forget and forgive.
3	Avoid sarcasm. Don't insist on the last word.
4	Never charge a player and, above all, no pointing your finger or yelling.
5	Hear only the things you should hear - be deaf to others.
6	Keep your temper. A decision made in anger is never sound.
7	Watch your language.
8	Take pride in your work at all times. Remember, respect for an umpire is created off the field as well as on.
9	Review your work. You will find, if you are honest, that 90% of the trouble is traceable to loafing.
10	No matter what your opinion of another umpire, never make an adverse comment regarding him. To do so is despicable and ungentlemanly.